

Family Court Announces

The Parenting Time Enforcement Court and the Support Enforcement Court

Effective October 16, 2006

Having received positive feedback from the **Support Modification Court**, the Family Court of the Maricopa County Superior Court is pleased to announce the start of the **Parenting Time Enforcement Court** and the **Support Enforcement Court** that is designed using the conference and subsequent hearing concept to provide quick resolution of parenting time or support enforcement matters. The new courts will provide litigants with an opportunity to reach an agreement with a Conference Officer. If complete agreement is not reached, a hearing with a Judicial Officer will be held immediately following the conference.

The new courts are expected to

- Resolve requests to enforce support promptly
- Resolve requests to enforce parenting time promptly
- Refer matters that involve more than one pending action (for example, both support modification and support enforcement) to the assigned Judge
- Reduce the number of times parties must come to court
- Ensure that judicial decisions are made by judicial officers

Parenting Time Enforcement Court and Support Enforcement Court were implemented on October 16, 2006 at the Downtown and Northwest Courthouses. The Northeast Courthouse will implement the Enforcement Courts in late January 2007. Southeast enforcement matters may be heard downtown.

What is Parenting Time Enforcement Court?

Parenting Time Enforcement Court is for parties who want to enforce a parenting time order. When parties file an expedited petition for parenting time enforcement, they will need to obtain an Order to Appear from the Family Court Conference Center (formally Expedited Services) for a conference and a subsequent evidentiary hearing before a judicial officer. Litigants will meet with a conference officer to try to reach an agreement. If complete agreement is reached during the conference, it will be memorialized as a written stipulation and, if approved, it will be signed by a Judicial Officer before the parties leave the courthouse.

If there is no agreement, or if only some issues are resolved, the parties will appear at an evidentiary hearing immediately after the conference at which they will receive a final order from a judicial officer. Because a judicial officer will enter a final order the same day as the conference and hearing, there will no longer be delays experienced under the former process which required a report and recommendation from an Expedited Services officer, review and adoption by a judicial officer, opportunities for the parties to object, and hearings to resolve the objections.